THE RISE OF THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE – AN ENTREPRENEURIAL GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

South Africa's socio-economic landscape is plagued by persistently high rates of unemployment, poverty, joblessness and sluggish economic growth. These economic conditions have resulted in a reduction in government expenditure, as well as a struggle for survival. The social enterprise sector is absorbing much of this burden by attempting to alleviate social ills. Yet, the failure rates and lack of entrepreneurial spirit in social enterprises is concerning. Additionally, little insight exists whether social enterprises are entrepreneurial, as well as whether gender plays a role in this regard. The purpose of this study is to therefore determine whether gender differences exist in entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of South African social enterprises. This study was quantitative in nature, making use of an adapted measuring instrument based on prominent EO instruments. The study was conducted in social enterprises across South Africa, with 342 responses being received. Data was analysed by means of an exploratory factor analysis, reliability analysis (through the Cronbach Alpha coefficient), as well as t-tests. Results indicated that only two dimensions of EO showed statistically significant differences between genders, namely proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness, with the risk-taking, innovativeness and autonomy dimensions showing no differences. The study is of value to social enterprises in South Africa as little research in EO has been conducted in this sector, thereby providing preliminary insights into gender specific differences in EO.

Key words: *Entrepreneurial orientation, South Africa, social enterprises, entrepreneurship*

INTRODUCTION

A topic which has many paying great attention to it is South African social enterprises. Social enterprises are when social ills cause travail amongst community members. South Africa is home to many social issues that could be combatted if social enterprises took the initiative to deal with such concerns (Littlewood & Holt, 2015: 526). Due to the extent of socio-economic challenges in South Africa, it is vital that social enterprises assist in combatting such social ills.

Certain social ills that can be considered are firstly that South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world. This is indicated by means of a Gini coefficient of 0.65 which reveals

that South Africa is highly unequal, as a Gini coefficient of 1 indicates complete inequality (World Bank, 2018: 42). Secondly, the rate of unemployment is a troubling concern, indicating that a large proportion of citizens, 27.1%, are unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2018: 1). Thirdly, high levels of poverty also call for social enterprise engagement. High levels of poverty cause economic growth to stagnate, therefore weakening the labour market and reducing the amount of income individuals have to spend in the economy. Due to the issues that South Africa faces, social enterprises are given an opportunity to step in and assist with combatting issues which many individuals face. Commercial organisations are often seen to ignore the social ills faced by the community as the core of their business is the pursuit of profit (Viljoen & O'Neill, 2001: 37). As there a number of social issues impacting the people of South Africa, in addition to commercial organisations paying very little attention to these issues, social enterprises are faced with a 'window of opportunity' to ensure that the betterment of communities are at the top of their operating models (Littlewood & Holt, 2015: 527).

However, social enterprises are also faced with major issues themselves. Social enterprises are seen to address societal but fail to sustain their own survival. The failure to survive is usually blamed on the lack of organisational culture and flexibility, as well as the turbulence of the environment. The purpose of understanding the reason behind many failures of social enterprises is to determine the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) that exists in these social enterprises as studies have shown that social enterprises often lack the ability to be entrepreneurial (Kusa, 2016: 118). The possession of innovative and creative factors in an organisation and the ability to act entrepreneurial is how EO is determined. In addition, no study, to date, has investigated gender-specific differences in EO in social enterprises. Also, little to no research has been conducted in EO in social enterprises, thereby creating a gap in literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review discusses key concepts in this study, namely social enterprises, entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurship in social enterprises.

Social enterprises

The definition of a social enterprise according to Leonardi, Huysman and Steinfield (2013: 1) is an organisation which participates in the sale of a product or service to a particular market, but is more concerned with the social service that is provided to the community, which is also the primary purpose of the organisation. A concept which is deliberated is what exactly constitutes the difference between for- profit organisations and social enterprises. The key component that differentiates these two organisations is that of the value proposition. When referring to a for-profit organisation, the value which is delivered to the market depends on an individual's need and affordability of the product or service, while the creation of some type of financial gain takes place for the stakeholders (Friedman, 2007: 173). Contrary to this however, social enterprises strive to create value which can impact members of society. It is estimated that in 2002, 98 920 social enterprises existed in South Africa, constituting 23.6% to the social services sector (Swilling & Russell, 2002). Stuart (2013: 2) however estimates that there are approximately 100 000 registered social enterprises in South Africa and approximately another 50 000 organisations which are not formally registered. This represents a sharp increase from the estimated 2,000 social enterprises in 1994 (Feuk, 2011: 4). It can therefore be deduced that the social enterprise sector in South Africa is burgeoning. Social enterprises in South Africa also contributed 1.2% to the national GDP and employed approximately 645 316 full-time employees, in addition to 1.5 million volunteers (Patel, 2012: 1).

Furthermore, the nature of a social enterprise is important to understand. Social enterprises are organisations which meet certain types of social needs which tend to be ignored by for-profit organisations or by government (Volkmann, 2012). The social needs of the community are often ignored by these parties due to a lack of commercial value. This then opens up a gap in the market which social enterprises can fill by better meeting the social needs of communities in need (Volkmann, 2012: 5). This gap allows social enterprises to meet the needs of these previously untargeted populations, as well as support the community where government has assured and then failed to take an interest (Volkmann, 2012; Harris & Albury, 2009; Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006). It should however be noted that not all social enterprises are equal in their missions. Alter (2007: 23) identified three types of social enterprises:

- A mission-centric organisation (purely social) – the social mission is core to the social enterprise and is specifically created to realise the mission by means of a self-financed model.
- Commercialisation of social services enterprise – the social mission is core to the social enterprise, but the organisation generates economic value by the sale of products or services which is then used to subsidise the social programmes which the organisation wishes to pursue.
- Social enterprise unrelated to mission – the social mission is not core to the social enterprise which results in the advancement of its mission for income generating purposes only. This social enterprise can be classified as using the social mission as a way to make a profit for the organisation.

This indicates that some social enterprises do not necessarily have a purely social mission, with commercial aspects in the forefront.

Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) is regarded as a concept that manifests itself at the strategic level in organisations, including elements such as preferences, behaviours, beliefs and organisational-level outcomes of a strategic nature (Covin, Green & Slevin, 2006: 57). EO can formally be defined as the "processes, practices and decision-making activities that lead to new entry" (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996:136). Other definitions include EO taking the form of an entrepreneurial model of organisations that innovate boldly and frequently, while taking risks in the product-market strategies (Miller & Friesen, 1982: 5). Zahra and Neubaum (1998:124) condense the essence of EO by stating that it "is the sum total of a firm's radical innovation, proactive strategic action, and risk-taking activities that are manifested in support of projects with uncertain outcomes". Miller (1983: 770) argued that EO is inherently dependent on the size of an organisation, as a larger organisation is shaped by managerial decision-making, it's structures and policies, while smaller businesses tend to be dominated by the vision, power and personality of the lead entrepreneur. While it was Miller (1983) who originally identified three dimensions of EO, namely risk-taking, innovativeness and proactiveness, other authors such as Covin and Slevin (1989), as well as Lumpkin and Dess (1996: 139) argue that two additional dimensions can be added, namely autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. *Risk-taking* can be defined as engaging in high-risk projects to achieve organisational objectives, by means of committing organisational resources at the possibility of losing these resources (Eggers, Kraus, Hughes, Laraway & Snycerski, 2013: 524; Certo, Moss & Short, 2009: 321). *Innovativeness* refers to a move away from established practices and technologies, towards engagement with new ideas through a process of experimentation involving creativity (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). *Proactiveness* refers to opportunity-seeking mindset that is forward-looking and requires initiative in order to anticipate future needs in the market (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005; Ardichvili, Cardozo & Ray, 2003). *Autonomy* makes reference to

"independent actions undertaken by entrepreneurial leaders, individuals or teams directed at bringing about a new venture, idea or vision and seeing it to execution" (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996: 142), while *competitive aggressiveness* is a "firm's inclination to intensely challenge its competitors directly to achieve entry or improve their position and outperform competition in the marketplace" (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996:142). Miller (1983: 770) argues that the original three dimensions of EO are uni-dimensional, indicating that all three need to be present in order for EO to exist, while Lumpkin and Dess (1996: 135) argue that the expanded five EO dimensions are multi-dimensional in nature and can vary independently of each other, indicating that EO can exist even if one or more dimensions are not present to the same extent.

Entrepreneurship and social enterprises

Some studies have shown that there is a lack of research in social enterprises due to owners of social enterprises often believing that the enterprise lacks enough time and money to pursue any avenues of research. Furthermore, there exists a lack of research in social enterprises as it is perceived that the organisation is far too small and does not have vital decisions to be made, therefore rendering the organisation almost insignificant (Wymer, Knowles & Gomes, 2006: 59-85). Most studies on social enterprises have been conducted in developed countries such as the United States of America (USA) or the United Kingdom (UK). However, due to the importance of social enterprises in alleviating social ills, similar studies are being conducted in differing countries (Kusa, 2016: 118).

Total Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) has been recognised as a reliable tool which is used to measure the entrepreneurial activity across many countries (Justo & De Castro, 2008: 605). This concept is based upon the working population in a country (18-64 years old) which have actively opened or are running a business that is no older than 42 months. The TEA is problematic in South Africa as the rate of individual opening or running a business fell by 25% in 2016 (Herrington, Kew & Mwanga, 2017: 6). However, along with TEA, a concept which has been newly introduced is that of Social Entrepreneurial Activity (SEA). The major distinction between TEA and SEA is that SEA deals with individuals who are actively involved in organisations of a social nature. A report by Herrington, Kew & Kew (2010: 99), reveals that across 49 of the GEM countries, the SEA rate ranges between 0.1% and 4.3%, which is a clear indication that only a small proportion of countries is actively involved in social programmes.

The GEM Report suggests that countries which are wealthier have more of their basic needs satisfied, this means they will have a larger pool of resources to address their social needs. It has also been noted that the average rate of SEA increases when there is an increase in the rate of economic development (Herrington, *et al.* 2010: 99). The SEA of males and females is estimated to be 1.3% and 0.5% respectively. This suggests that males are more likely to establish a social enterprise (Herrington, *et al.* 2010: 40). It is however cause for concern as women in South Africa are already under-represented in entrepreneurial activity. It is estimated that the male to female ratio is 1.5:1 in entrepreneurship and 2.6:1 in social entrepreneurship (Herrington, *et al.* 2010: 102). This indicates that there is a higher rate of females starting their own ventures for profit purposes. However, in social enterprises, females have a lower rate of involvement.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to determine whether gender differences exist in entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of South African social enterprises. Secondary objectives included reliability testing (through the Cronbach Alpha coefficient) of an adapted measuring

instrument tailored to the social enterprise sector, as well as testing suitability of the underlying five EO factors in social enterprises.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was based a positivist research paradigm, utilising a quantitative research approach and an exploratory research strategy. The population for the study comprised of owners and employees of social enterprises in South Africa. Social enterprises comprise 27.8% of registered business in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2016: 1). It is estimated that there are currently 153,667 registered social enterprises in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2016: 1). In this study a probability sampling approach was followed in the form of simple random sampling, thereby allowing for results to be generalised across the population. The sampling frame in the study was constructed by accessing databases of social enterprise owners and employees in South Africa. Inclusion criteria were that respondents could be of any race, gender and religion, be a social enterprise that is formally registered, as well as the social enterprise being based in South Africa. Exclusion criteria included a social enterprise that is not formally registered and is operating outside of South Africa. Data was collected by means of a self-administered, adapted 30-item measuring instrument containing five-point Likert style questions. The instrument was adapted from prominent EO instruments from Miller, Covin and Slevin (1989) and Hughes and Morgan (2007). The questionnaire included scale items taken from the Miller, Covin and Slevin (1989) EO scale such as innovativeness (I1, I2 and I3), proactiveness (P4, P5 and P6) and risk-taking (R1, R2 and R3). The questionnaire also included scale items from the Hughes and Morgan (2007) EO scale which included innovativeness (I4 and I5), proactiveness (P1, P2 and P3), risk-taking (R4, R5 and R6), competitive aggressiveness (C1, C2 and C3) and autonomy (A1 – A6). The instrument was therefore structured according to five EO dimensions, namely autonomy, proactiveness, innovativeness, risk-taking and competitive aggressiveness. Section B contained the EO scales, while Section A of the measuring instrument contained demographic-related questions.
Data collection took the form of an online questionnaire, hosted on Google Forms and distributed via e-mail. E-mail addresses for social enterprises were obtained from a number of different databases, namely from the UJ Centre for Entrepreneurship, RainbowNation.com, CharitySA.co.za and Code South Africa Data Portal. A total number of 1 764 questionnaires was distributed online, yielding 342 responses, thereby culminating in a response rate of 19.4%. Data was analysed in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25, utilising techniques such as an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), reliability analysis (through the Cronbach Alpha coefficient), independent t-tests and descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode and standard deviation). Before commencing the questionnaire, respondents were requested to provide consent for the study, which indicated statements on anonymity, confidentiality, right to withdraw at any point, as well as adhering to ethical principles as contained in the ethical clearance, granted at the College of Businesses and Economics at the University of Johannesburg.

FINDINGS

The demographics indicate that 117 of these responses were from males, while 225 were from females. Before investigating gender differences in EO in social enterprises, a reliability analysis was conducted to ascertain if the adapted measuring instrument could be considered reliable. Table 1 indicates the findings of the reliability analysis. Cronbach's alpha values are seen as unreliable if the values are 0.7 or below (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011: 54). Table 1 shows that all factors were above the threshold of 0.7, ranging from 0.7 to 0.85. The risk-taking

dimension split into two separate factors, the details of which will be discussed under the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). As all factors recorded values of grater than 0.7 the instrument can be regarded as reliable.

TABLE 1
CRONBACH'S ALPHA VALUES

Factor	Number of questions	Cronbach's Alpha
Managerial risk-taking	3	0.70
Employee risk-taking	3	0.80
Innovation	6	0.81
Proactiveness	6	0.82
Competitive aggressiveness	5	0.73
Autonomy	6	0.85

Source: Research findings

Next, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to identify whether a smaller number of hypothetical constructs are able to explain the covariation amongst a set of measured variables (Watkins, 2018: 219). As part of the factor analysis, the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used, as well as Barlett's test of sphericity, indicating whether the data is suitable for factor analysis. The results of these two tests are outlined in Table 2.

TABLE 2
KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST OF SPHERICITY

KMO		0.845
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2989.22
	Df	253
	Sig.	0.00

Source: Research findings

The observed KMO value was above the cut-off value of 0.6, indicating that the data is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test for sphericity indicated a significance value of 0.00, below $p<0.05$, indicating that the factor analysis was suitable for the data set.

The results of the EFA are presented in Table 3 and 4. To determine the factors which are to be retained, the total variance explained needs to be considered. Six factors were extracted as they had eigenvalues greater than 1. The six factors cumulatively explained a variance of 62.92%, as outlined in Table 3.

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Total Variance Explained									
	Initial Eigenvalues			**Extraction Sum of Squared Loadings**			**Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings**		
Factor	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	6.14	26.69	26.69	6.14	26.69	26.69	3.66	15.92	15.92
2	2.84	12.37	39.06	2.84	12.37	39.06	2.71	11.77	27.69
3	1.93	8.41	47.47	1.93	8.41	47.47	2.39	10.38	38.07
4	1.29	5.60	53.07	1.29	5.60	53.07	2.20	9.55	47.62
5	1.16	5.06	58.13	1.16	5.06	58.13	1.92	8.33	55.95

6	1.10	4.80	**62.92**	1.10	4.80	62.92	1.60	6.97	**62.92**

Source: Research findings

The rotated factor matrix can be observed in Table 4 which indicates that the five original factors loaded under the same distinct variables as the original framework. However, the risk-taking dimension split into two factors. This can be attributed to the fact that items R1-R3 related to questions on managerial risk-taking, while R4-R6 concerned themselves with employee risk-taking.

TABLE 4
ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX

Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
A4	0.788	0.193	-0.073	0.052	-0.025	0.108
A3	0.768	-0.011	-0.068	0.128	-0.067	0.111
A1	0.721	0.115	0.247	0.119	-0.054	0.106
A6	0.701	0.162	-0.124	0.172	-0.007	-0.090
A2	0.689	0.158	0.228	0.064	0.089	0.182
A5	0.677	0.132	0.004	0.316	-0.021	-0.023
P2	0.186	0.780	0.015	0.220	-0.047	0.150
P3	0.205	0.777	0.215	0.034	0.009	0.113
P1	0.131	0.726	0.103	0.332	-0.005	0.058
P5	0.263	0.540	0.244	0.025	-0.242	0.299
C3	-0.045	-0.045	0.761	-0.035	0.082	0.062
C5	0.108	0.010	0.710	0.099	0.036	0.145
C2	-0.063	0.382	0.702	-0.022	0.042	-0.039
C1	0.073	0.419	0.655	0.003	0.126	0.017
R5	0.287	0.207	0.002	0.812	-0.106	0.092
R4	0.152	0.098	0.100	0.786	-0.134	0.020
R6	0.369	0.263	-0.103	0.627	-0.048	0.252
R2	-0.041	0.033	0.040	-0.088	0.832	-0.017
R3	0.125	-0.048	0.124	0.055	0.722	0.029
R1	-0.179	-0.080	0.054	-0.262	0.721	-0.095
I3	0.061	0.039	0.134	-0.068	-0.032	0.800
I1	0.112	0.215	0.203	0.264	0.112	0.671
I2	0.113	0.231	-0.170	0.186	-0.187	0.445

Source: Research findings

Furthermore, the communalities in Table 4 all lie above 0.3, indicating a satisfactory fit with each factor. Pallant (2016) indicates that values below 0.3 mean that the items in the component have a poor fit with the original framework.

To determine if gender influenced EO within social enterprises, a t-test was conducted between gender and the EO dimensions under investigation. Table 5 indicates the mean and standard deviation for each of the groups of the study. The number of responses is indicated to determine if data was missing, which was not the case in this study.

TABLE 5
GENDER VS FACTORS T-TEST

T-Test Gender vs Factors				
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Managerial Risk-taking	Male	117	3.50	0.81
	Female	225	3.45	0.86
Employee Risk-taking	Male	117	3.81	0.85
	Female	225	3.55	0.91
Innovation	Male	117	3.61	0.72
	Female	225	3.45	0.90
Proactiveness	Male	117	3.53	0.77
	Female	225	3.32	0.85
Competitive Aggressiveness	Male	117	2.92	0.88
	Female	225	2.63	0.92
Autonomy	Male	117	3.76	0.72
	Female	225	3.63	0.74

Source: Research findings

Table 6 below depicts the independent t-test between the EO factors and the gender of the respondents. The independent t-test indicates Levene's test for the equality of variances, the t-test for equality of means as well as the 5% confidence interval.

TABLE 6
INDEPENDENT T-TEST

		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Managerial Risk-Taking	Equal variances assumed	0.001	0.98	0.56	340	0.58	0.054	0.097	-0.136	0.244
	Equal variances not assumed			0.57	247	0.57	0.054	0.095	-0.133	0.241
Employee Risk-Taking	Equal variances assumed	1.29	0.26	2.65	340	0.01	0.268	0.101	0.069	0.467
	Equal variances not assumed			2.71	249	0.01	0.268	0.099	0.073	0.463
Innovation	Equal variances assumed	8.19	0.01	1.65	340	0.10	0.158	0.096	-0.030	0.346
	Equal variances not assumed			1.77	283	0.08	0.158	0.089	-0.018	0.334

Proactiveness	Equal variances assumed	0.96	0.33	2.20	340	0.03	0.207	0.094	0.022	0.391
	Equal variances not assumed			2.27	256	0.02	0.207	0.091	0.027	0.386
Competitive Aggressiveness	Equal variances assumed	0.43	0.52	2.80	340	0.01	0.289	0.103	0.086	0.492
	Equal variances not assumed			2.84	243	0.01	0.289	0.102	0.088	0.489
Autonomy	Equal variances assumed	.22	0.64	1.52	340	0.13	0.127	0.084	-0.037	0.292
	Equal variances not assumed			1.53	241	0.13	0.127	0.083	-0.036	0.291

Source: Research findings

Pallant (2016: 177) advises that four steps need to be followed in order to conduct independent t-tests. These six steps include (i) analysing the group statistics to determine whether display of data is correct; (ii) using Levene's test for equality of variances to ascertain whether equal variances can be assumed or not, (iii) determining existence of statistically significant differences between groups by means of the t-test for equality of means, (iv) determining effect size to ascertain the exact magnitude of difference that existed between the groups.

In terms of Levene's test for *managerial risk-taking* ($p=0.976$), as well as employee risk-taking ($p=0.256$), the null hypothesis can be accepted as the significance value is higher than $p>0.05$. This indicates that equal variances can be assumed, therefore no statistically significant difference exists between genders when exploring the managerial risk-taking dimension in a social enterprise. The null hypothesis could be accepted, which indicates that there was none or no statistically significant difference between the two means (Moore, Notz & Fligner, 2013). This finding is in agreement with other studies, as one study argues that no real difference can be observed in risk-taking behaviours when switching from male CEO to a female CEO (Elsaid & Davidson, 2009; Ryan & Wiggins, 2002). Other studies have however found that female managers are more risk averse than their male counterparts (Beckmann & Menkhoff, 2008: 364) whereas male executives are often seen as more risk averse then their female counterparts (Iqbal, Sewon & Baek, 2006: 63). This however contradicts a more recent study which found that more financial stability is observed when females are present in executive positions (Amore & Garofalo, 2016).

In terms of innovation ($p=0.004$), the null hypothesis was rejected as the observed value is lower than $p>0.05$, indicating that equal variances were not assumed. Furthermore, when exploring the t-test of equality of means, $p= 0.078$, indicating that the null hypothesis can be accepted. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between the extents of male innovation versus female innovation in a social enterprise. Findings of other studies have varied on this dimension, as innovation has been found to not be gender-neutral and many have criticised innovation policies as being too narrow and exclusive (Berglund & Thorslund, 2010; Pettersson, 2007).

In terms of proactiveness (p=0.329), the observed significant value was lower than p=0.05, which means that for this dimension equal variances are assumed. Further, the t-test of equality of means indicates that the Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.028, therefore p<0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that there is a statistically significant difference between males and females when being proactive in social enterprises. The effect size of the independent sample test was calculated to determine the exact difference between males and females in the proactiveness of social enterprises.

$$\text{Eta squared } (n^2) = \frac{t^2}{t^2+(N1+N2-2)}$$
$$= \frac{2.201^2}{2.201^2+(117+225-2)}$$
$$= \frac{4.844401}{344.844401}$$
$$= 0.014048078$$
$$= 0.01$$

Cohen (1988) advises that the magnitude of effect size can be classified as 0.01 = small effect, 0.06 = moderate effect and 0.14 = large effect. The result of 0.01 indicates a small effect size, meaning that there is only a small difference in relation to gender and the proactiveness dimension. This is in agreement with other studies (Bindl & Parker, 2010; van Dyne and LePine, 1998) which found that men are more likely to voice their concerns regarding issues in the workplace. This is corroborated by Claes and Ruiz-Quintanilla (1998), as well as Kanfer, Wanberg and Kantrowitz (2001) who maintain that in terms of job search and networking, men are regarded as more proactive then women. Contrary to this, however, it has also been found in other studies that there is no statistically significant difference between work behaviour and proactiveness between genders and that both males and females are able to take charge, voice opinions and take initiative in the work place (Shirandula, Mapelu & Sepula, 2017).

For the competitive aggressiveness dimension, it was found that p>0.05 (p=0.515), therefore it was possible to accept the null hypothesis. Equal variances were therefore assumed. Upon exploring the t-test of equality of means, the Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.005 and therefore p<0.05, indicating that a statistically significant difference exists between males and females in the level of competitive aggressiveness in a social enterprise. Next, the effect size was calculated.

$$\text{Eta squared } (n^2) = \frac{t^2}{t^2+(N1+N2-2)}$$
$$= \frac{2.803^2}{2.803^2+(117+225-2)}$$
$$= \frac{7.856809}{347.856809}$$
$$= 0.02258633$$

In line with Cohen's classification of effect size, the result of 0.02 indicates a small effect, implying that there is a small difference in relation to gender and the competitive aggressiveness dimension. Other Studies concur with this finding as it can be seen that there is a slight difference insofar as women are more likely to compete in the absence of time constraints and task stereotypes but often shy away from competing when time constraints and task stereotypes are in fact present (Shurchkov, 2012).

Lastly, in terms of autonomy, the null hypothesis was accepted as p=0.639, therefore exceeding the significance value of 0.05. This means that for this dimension, equal variances can be assumed. This further means that there was no statistically significant difference between males and females regarding autonomy in social enterprises. In other studies however, males and females have differed in their level of autonomy. Sexton and Bowman-Upton (1990: 29) note that female entrepreneurs are more autonomous then their male counterparts. However, supporting the results found in this study, Neneh, van Zyl and van Noordwyk (2016) believe that no significant difference exists between males and females regarding autonomous behaviour.

Finally, based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that only two dimensions of EO, namely proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness, indicate a statistically significant difference based on gender. Therefore, these two dimensions will differ in a social enterprise when the enterprise has either more males or more females in their employ.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to ascertain whether gender differences exist in entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of South African social enterprises, as well as to test a measuring instrument adapted for social enterprises, as well as test the underlying EO factors in social enterprises. As the social enterprise sector fills an important void in the South African socio-economic landscape, the findings provide important insights for this sector. Findings indicated that statistically significant differences could only be observed for two EO dimensions, proactiveness and aggressiveness, between genders. The adapted instrument was found to be reliable, while the factor analysis indicated presence of six dimensions in comparison to the envisaged five dimensions, as risk-taking split into managerial and employee-related measures.

The findings of this study are of value to managers and owners in social enterprises as it provides insight into gender specific differences in EO, or lack thereof. As no difference could be found for risk-taking, innovativeness and autonomy, the effect of any related entrepreneurial policies and processes designed by managers will not differ between males and females. Managers in social enterprises should be cognisant that a difference might exist between males and females in terms of proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness. However, as social enterprises by their very nature seek to address societal needs, competitive aggressiveness may not take the same form as in commercial enterprises where competition for customers and revenue is high. As the dynamic entrepreneurial nature of social enterprises has not been explored to a great extent, this study provides some insights into the EO phenomenon within social enterprises. Management in social enterprises should be cognisant that in particular risk-taking related policies and processes are implemented in consultation with employees, as perceptions on these policies may differ. Also, managers in social enterprises can use the adapted measuring instrument to determine internal EO levels, as the instrument was found to be reliable. Managers play an important role in instilling a culture of entrepreneurship, most prominently through effective goal setting, implementation of a reward and innovation system promoting entrepreneurial actions, providing capital for experimentation, communication between management and employees, intrapreneurship championing by managers at all levels, empowering employees, as well as soliciting staff input (Goosen, de Coning & Smit, 2002).

Future research can investigate social enterprises in other emerging markets, thereby allowing comparison between these countries. Other studies could also investigate the effect of other demographic variables on EO, such as age, education and length of service. Similarly, other studies may investigate difference between genders in terms of EO in social enterprises based on the type of social enterprise, i.e. between a mission-centric, commercially oriented and social

enterprise unrelated to mission type. Lastly, as the adapted measuring instrument was deemed reliable, future studies can test the instrument in different social contexts for verification purposes.

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